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DEVELOPING EDUCATION SYSTEMS in the OIL STATES OF ARABIA:
CONFLICTS OF PURPOSE AND FOCUS

by

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The views and interpretations in this paper are those of the authors and should not be attributed to the Centre for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies or the University of Durham.

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1. PREFACE

The aim of this paper is to stimulate discussion on contemporary concepts and systems of education and training in the oil-rich states of the Arabian peninsula. In particular, the arguments will focus upon how education and training affect and are affected by economic and social development in these oil-rich states. The speed and scope of educational, social and economic development in the states of Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates - facilitated by receipt of oil revenues - makes the analysis of educational development especially interesting in itself. The timeliness of such a discussion is enhanced by the fact that, following between one and three decades of development, these states are beginning to evaluate and take stock, rather than forge on with expansionism. Indeed, falling world crude oil prices might well precipitate some thoughtful consolidation.

Moreover, the lessons about rapid educational expansion being learnt by the oil states bear consideration elsewhere. The input by external advisers to education and training systems, the questions of selectivity and tracking, the conflicts between social demand, quality and direction of education and training are, perhaps, posed more acutely in the Arabian oil state environment than in other areas of the world.

2. INTRODUCTION

The spectacular economic progress made by the Arabian oil-exporting states over the past decade is common knowledge. Their successes in establishing physical infrastructure as a precursor to domestic industrialisation have not been matched anywhere else in the world. The oil states, by investing their oil revenues in domestic economic development, are now determinedly set upon a course towards becoming modern industrial states.

Rulers and planners in these states believe that with industrialisation comes modernisation, as well as diversification of national revenues away from oil income. Investments in education and health services have featured large in this process of industrialisation and modernisation. Apart from fulfilling a basic human demand, the investment in education was seen by national planners, almost from its inception, essentially as the preparation of the population to become the workforce of a modern industrial state.

The scale of receipt of oil revenues all but removed the most common constraint to rapid economic growth - insufficient capital - leaving the small size and limited educational attainment of the populations of these states as the major impediments. Migrant workers were imported in large numbers to facilitate development in the short term, but always with the premise that the nationals of the oil states would meanwhile be educated to replace large numbers of these immigrants and so come to be active members of burgeoning and technically complex modern economies. Hence the emphasis put upon education.

The oil revenues facilitated massive investments to put into practice the planners' aims of developing education systems rapidly; these oil states have embarked upon an educational revolution as they are passing through economic metamorphosis.

Ostensibly, the oil states are achieving as much success in developing their education systems as they are with their economic development. The education systems are diversifying; numbers of students are increasing; enrolments of boys of primary school age are approaching 100 per cent; education of females is more widely accepted; students are sent on scholarships abroad and local curricula are becoming increasingly sophisticated as three levels of education become available to all students.

Closer examination gives cause for concern, however. It is in some respects early to judge, but there appear to be some serious shortcomings in the burgeoning education systems of these states: the very scale and pace of investment have brought to light not only the normal logistical difficulties of educational service provision in a developing country but also some flaws which seem to result from incompatible aims - even concepts - within the systems.

Constructive examination of these inconsistencies, which will later be characterised as a pervasive dualism, is of value in analysing the progress of human resource development in these states. Moreover, in this analysis of education system development under social and economic conditions prevailing in the Arabian oil states, there are more general lessons to be learnt.

3. THE ECONOMIC BACKGROUND

The oil states of Arabia are not concerned with the normal issues of increasing employment, stimulating savings for investment, economic growth versus income distribution, or conflicting demands upon investment expenditures.

All these states enjoy rapid rates of economic growth and increases in the personal incomes of nationals.

In per capita terms, some of these states are immensely wealthy. The UAE per capita gross domestic product (GDP) is over $29,000 (1982) for nationals and that of Kuwait some $22,000 for the same year. Oman reflects the rapid changes in wealth that have occurred in the region: in 1979 GDP was about $3,700 per capita, but by 1982 it probably topped $6,000.

Whilst keeping close control of their political power, the rulers of the oil-exporting states chose to spread this wealth amongst their populations and provided water supplies, electricity and improved housing conditions. These utilities, and an expanding system of government bureaucracy to provide social services, characterised the first moves towards modernity. The establishment and administration of power stations, roads, posts, airports, telephones, hospitals, clinics, schools and other infrastructure absorbed a large share of the early, relatively limited oil revenues. A start was also made with industrialisation, in the form of petro-chemical industries and small scale import-substituting ventures.

With the oil price increases of 1973 and 1979, increased oil revenues were invested in domestic industrialisation, transforming the scale of economic development plans, to include large scale industrial sectors using high technology processes to produce goods for export. The development plans of the states considered here are remarkably similar, the differences between their economies depending upon the point which each state has reached on this path towards a modern industrial economy, rather than any qualitative differences in aims. In all of the states the traditional economy is quickly being eclipsed by modern sector urban growth. All efforts are being directed towards encouraging the domestic populations to take an active part in this process of industrialisation. Nonetheless, as is well known, much of this economic transformation, occurring over as little as a decade in some of these states (especially rapid change has occurred in Saudi Arabia and Oman) has been facilitated in large part by imported labour and expertise.

A major, if not the major, role of education and training of the nationals of these states was, and remains, the development of the nationals' ability to displace the non-nationals from at least the critical areas of the economies.

4. THE SOCIAL BACKGROUND

4.1 The Traditional Basis

The national populations of these states are small, although growing at some of the most rapid rates of natural increase in the world. The national populations of Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and UAE in aggregate do not greatly exceed 7 million. The national population of Qatar is less than 100,000, and that of UAE less than 250,000. Only Saudi Arabia's population of about 5 million nationals actually exceeds one million.

Before the large-scale extraction of oil, these small populations could be characterised as predominantly rural, comprising nomadic and semi-nomadic pastoralists, oasis cultivators and, near the coasts, fishermen, all living in a largely (though by no means entirely) traditional subsistence economy. The small urban populations headed a trading network extending by sea to South East Asia and East Africa, and by land into North Africa and the Levant. Overall, though, the Gulf area was poor (especially after the collapse of the pearling trade in the 1920s) and in decline. Levels of literacy were low (in 1968 the literacy rate of those aged 15 plus was only 14 per cent), infant mortality rates high and life expectancy short.

The states have remained sheikhdoms, with political power closely concentrated in the hands of a ruling elite. Much of modern development is an extension of the traditional obligations between Sheikhs and their tributary populations, translated into modern form: thus it has become the obligation of the rulers to provide employment for their national populations, who accept it as a right in exchange for their loyalty and up-holding of the social mores. Employment of nationals in these states, especially in government, has therefore been seen as a means of spreading, rather than generating, income. The need to be productive and to contribute to the economy, and to receive remuneration related only to their productive addition to the economy, is therefore an alien concept to many nationals of the oil-rich states. (Perhaps these nationals also sense that, no matter how hard they try, they will find it impossible to generate by other means - industry - wealth such as they now receive through the simple sale of a commodity - oil.)

4.2 The Role of Education and Training

It is in changing such attitudes, amongst others, that education is expected by economic planners to be effective. If the industrial development plans and aims of 'localising' much of the essential workforce are to be successful, the modern education and training system must prepare people for a realistic role in the modern sector workforce.

Continued reliance upon non-nationals at the present level is regarded as politically undesirable - as many as 88 per cent of workers in the UAE are non-national. The equivalent figure for Kuwait is 78 per cent, for Qatar 85 per cent and for Saudi Arabia 46 per cent. Indeed, such dependence is not even healthy economically in the longer term. If diversification of national income is to be effective, nationals must take an active and formal part in modern industrial activity.

In many respects, the task facing the educators in these states - the production of a modern sector, essentially western-motivated, industrial workforce imbued with a sense of Muslim values and Arab ethnic outlook - is daunting indeed.

The expansion of education in the oil-rich states is so recent that even today only about 50 per cent of the adult male national population is literate. Even in Kuwait, where modern education has been established since the 1950s, the literacy rate of the adult population in 1975 was only 55 per cent. Efforts to improve this situation are earnest, when measured by expenditure on educational development, but if some wider considerations are taken into account the difficulties facing educators are immense.

4.3 Aspects of Modern Education

(i) Literacy The children of the Arabian oil states, the first generation there to attempt en masse to achieve functional literacy, have a formidable task before them. The written word, as they must learn it, is the classical Arabic not the colloquial Arabic word. Furthermore, they may be obliged to learn it from an immigrant Arab teacher, probably Egyptian, who does not share with them the same colloquial Arabic of their home environment. The words he uses in his explanations, his pronunciation and his dialect, are different from those used by his pupils in their daily lives. Also, the children must put their hard won and yet incomplete literacy to use in the study of general subjects, as opposed to language study, for even in general subjects the written word, as far as possible, is the classical Arabic word. Moreover, the general subjects may be taught by an Arab immigrant teacher from another Arabic-speaking country, perhaps Jordan or Sudan, with the further complication of yet another form of colloquial Arabic as the medium of communication and informal explanation.

Additionally, the whole question of education and literacy is overlain by the differing attitudes towards it of the Islamic world and of the Western world whose technology the Arab oil states wish to adopt.

(ii) Philosophy of Education In the West, where much of modern technology originates, and subsequently finds its way into the Arabian oil states by invitation or infiltration, truth is no longer the daughter of time, but neither is it the child of authority. Instead, truth has become a hypothesis serving present needs until a more attractive or better substantiated hypothesis is invented. Faith is in decline and science is in the ascendant. Education systems win popular approval by apparently avoiding indoctrination. Students who learn to reason, to assess probability, to make rational inferences from data and, in rare instances, to discover new truths, or new aspects of old truths, win praise and promotion. Their merit is recognised and technological society makes way for their climb to positions of power.

In the Arabian oil states, the cradle of Islam, truth was revealed to men fourteen hundred years ago and it has endured. It is believed to serve the needs of all men in universal time. Faith lives and science must accommodate itself to it. Education systems win popular approval by their affirmation of faith, and well-educated people are believed to be those who have learnt the word of God and can discipline themselves in accordance with the will of God. Students who prove their ability to memorize revealed truth correctly, and can quote it in appropriate contexts, win praise and respect today as in the past. Their virtue is recognised, and this may be reward enough, for respect is valued highly. Conservative society encourages such students to perfect their knowledge of Islam, become men of learning, and perhaps in time the custodians of Islamic law and jurisprudence. Some, in the manner of Western students of classics

before the age of modern technology, may rise to positions of secular power, but their study of Islam and its eternal truth is not preparation for power in technological society.

Educational systems are founded in the cultural values of the society in which they exist: they reflect those values, help to perpetuate them and to some extent modify them. In the West, at present, inventiveness and creativity are highly valued. There is a reaching out for new ideas, new recreations, new life styles, new art forms. Repetition, rules and ritual find little favour. Restrictions imposed upon inquiry and expression are few. Biological 'engineering' is the latest technology and men are working to create new forms of life. The living substance is their raw material: they aim to improve upon nature, to speed up evolution, to select 'desirable' characteristics, to improve 'quality'. Schools in the West encourage pupils whose own inclinations are towards intellectual activity congruous with those values. Curricula and syllabuses are designed accordingly. Doubts and warnings about the path the West is following are heard from time to time, at all levels of society, but there is every likelihood that there will be no turning back yet.

The Islamic Arabian oil states are anxious to exploit Western technology selectively, so that economic growth may continue without being dependent on the fickle value of oil, while the old, cherished values of duty to God, obedience to revealed truth and conformity to a well-defined moral code, may be preserved. In these oil states, the educational systems are recent and, to a large extent, are modelled on those of the West. But schools are required to foster belief in Islam and work in every sense 'in the Name of God' and to their credit this is what they try to do. However, as is argued above, they are also required to prepare pupils for life in modern, technological society, in which eventually the pupils will be obliged to work. For this, pupils must have the education that will enable them to acquire the skills necessary, unless the Arabian oil states are in fact to be for ever dependent upon imported labour.

4.4 Imported Influences upon Education in the Oil States

In order to fulfil the secular part of their assignment, the oil states' school authorities are obliged to call upon the services of educationists from other Arab States or upon educationists from the West.

Arab advisers reflect the cultural values of a society where the conflict between Islam and technology and modern political ideologies is not yet resolved.

Educationists from the West are bound by different values, one of which, highly valued by Westerners, is in conflict with much that is at the very heart of Islam. Briefly, it is that Westerners believe that man is master of his own fate and is yet to solve the great mystery of the origin of life. And this Western belief is absolute anathema to all Muslims. Therefore, when Western educationists propose such things as attempting to measure an individual's intellectual capacity, and predict the probability of his success or failure, and devise curricula designed to turn him into a Western-type thinker, they arouse in their clients suspicion and even hostility.

Thus the clash between modern economic development and traditional Islamic values enters the heart of the process of education.

But wider influences for change are afoot in the oil states, as elsewhere, than those manifest within the education and training systems. Before passing to discussion of the rate of growth of these systems, it is worth glancing at some of the most potent and pervasive influences militating in favour of social change.

The generation of children, who will be the first to achieve extensive literacy, are mostly from Muslim families lacking functional literacy but having immense respect for the spiritual and moral authority of Islam and for the scholars able not only to recite the Quran but also to read it with genuine understanding. This respect is traditional and it extends to the social and more secular authority of men recognized as tribal leaders or sheikhs. It extends also to heads of families and, to some extent, to old people generally ('old' and therefore 'wise'). It begins to diminish, however, particularly among young people, as literacy grows and, far more importantly and causatively, as society is affected by such influences as immigration and out-migration; new patterns of work and leisure; the cleverly promoted consumption of new goods, largely imported, to attract the spending of greater expendable income; and new, virtually instant forms of communication, often in the name of entertainment, some conveying subtly persuasive, if not insidious, messages encouraging change. The resultant nascent social upheaval, as it appears to many of the older generations, makes them uneasy and anxious to maintain respect for traditional authority. They are disturbed by questioning attitudes beginning to be displayed by young people, newly educated and responsive to the heralds of change, as young people are everywhere, not just in the Arabian oil states.

Some older people, understandably, are suspicious of the new educational systems, which they see as agents of change for the worse and promoters of challenge to authority. Curiously, this concern finds an echo in the schools themselves, where teachers, almost wholly immigrant, and themselves first generation literates, sense and resent a challenge to their authority from pupils whose education is received not just in school, where it may be largely ineffective (for reasons to be explained), but in the larger informational environment which cannot be kept out of the Arabian oil states, or indeed other states of the modern world, to which the pupils are more sensitive than the teachers. Indeed, in this wider context it is not an exaggeration to say that schools and teachers tacitly endeavour to delay change and that literacy itself, the first concern of educational systems as they exist, and once a powerful agent of change, is being overtaken by far more powerful forces.

Today, for example, instant communication by means of telephone reduces the need to transmit written messages and, as the telephone becomes available, ordinary people resort to it as being less laborious than writing, and cheaper, as well as instant. Similarly, they find reading tedious as a means of entertainment, or acquiring knowledge, for television and radio provide all they desire. This is true in the West, where declining levels of literacy are a matter of concern to educationists, and it is true in the Arabian oil states where the attempt to make the mass of people literate may be set back by it. A 'substitute' literacy is emerging and young people in the oil states sense it and are impatient with older peoples' desire to preserve fossilized languages with strange spelling conventions and tortuous inflexions. The older conventional literacy will be preserved and valued by a new hierarchy, but the mass of people may be content with

substitute literacy, just as they are resorting to the pocket electronic calculator, and the effect on language may resemble that which the calculator is having on numeracy.

The imported teachers in the oil-rich states are even less able to cope with these changes than are many teachers in the Western world. If, added to this, the more constraining Islamic educational environment is also considered, it is hardly surprising that young students, extensively influenced by and informed about the wider world by the media not reliant upon literacy, are impatient with their education systems.

Nonetheless, it is, inevitably, the formal education and training system that remains the instrument of government policy in the oil states - attempts to constrain the wider social influences only enhance this. It is to the spectacular expansion of these education systems that the discussion turns.

5. THE EXPANSION OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEMS

The growth of the education and training systems in the oil-rich states of Arabia has been spectacular.

For example, although extensive primary education was only made available in Kuwait in 1952, when a few hundred students attended school, today there are over 125,000 primary students in Kuwait; more than 20 per cent of the Kuwaiti population is in full-time education at school. In Qatar, formal modern education for boys began in 1951, and for girls in 1955. Yet, by 1979/80, there were some 40,000 Qatari nationals in school. In Abu Dhabi, modern education began with the opening of the first primary school in 1958, but by 1980/81 there were over 90 schools, enrolling over 100,000 students from the primary to the secondary levels. In 1966, when the first preparatory school was opened, there were five primary schools. The first secondary school followed in 1967, when adult education and literacy classes were also established. By 1977, only 10 years after the first secondary school, the University of Al Ain was founded.

Similarly, the Oman education system expanded from a total enrolment of only 3,000 in 1971 to 122,106 ten years later. A University will open in 1986. From only a slightly earlier beginning, enrolment in Saudi Arabian schools has topped 1,000,000. The situation is summarised in Table 1.

There can be no doubt that the rulers in these states have taken seriously their responsibility for educating their populations, bearing in mind the dual aim of enhancing their participation in the nation at large and making them more capable as modern industrial workforces. Of necessity, these burgeoning education systems have been 'imported'. Starting with largely illiterate populations, education systems and personnel had to be brought in from other Arab states.

Inevitably, weaknesses of these foreign systems, as well as their strengths have been introduced into these education-hungry oil states.

The state-provided education system dominates education services in these states, but limited provision of private education is developing. Some of the children of particularly wealthy nationals are privately schooled. But the main role of private education is to cater for the

TABLE 1: EVOLUTION OF EDUCATION ENROLMENT IN THE OIL-EXPORTING STATES OF BAHRAIN, KUWAIT, OMAN, QATAR, SAUDI ARABIA AND UNITED ARAB EMIRATES, 1975/76 - 1980/81

Level	1975/76	Growth Rate (per cent)	1979/80 (a)
Bahrain			
Primary	41,751	1.7	44,592
Preparatory	8,533	13.7	14,241
Secondary General	7,154	- 2.7	6,399
Commercial	984	5.8	1,235
Industrial	681	4.5	813
Secondary total	8,819	- 1.1	8,447
Grand total	59,103	3.3	67,280
Kuwait			1980/81
Primary	92,240	6.3	125,114
Preparatory	59,767	11.0	100,618
Secondary General			
Commercial			
Industrial			
Secondary total	29,962	11.6	51,960
Grand total	181,969	8.8	277,692
Oman			1980/81
Primary	54,457	11.0	91,652
Preparatory	1,095	65.8	13,729
Secondary General	200	50.6	1,551
Commercial			78
Industrial			956
Secondary total			2,585
Grand total	55,752	14.1	107,966
Qatar			1980/81
Primary	21,402	3.4	25,266
Preparatory	5,217	11.5	8,998
Secondary General	2,630	14.8	5,240
Commercial	87	- 7.5	59
Industrial	39	16.6	56
Secondary total	2,756	14.2	5,355
Grand total	29,375	6.2	39,619
Saudi Arabia			1980/81
Primary	686,108	6.3	930,436
Preparatory	154,488	10.7	256,724
Secondary General	48,826	15.4	100,023
Commercial			
Industrial	4,063	11.2	6,920
Secondary total	52,889	15.1	106,943
Grand total	893,485	7.7	1,294,103
United Arab Emirates			1980/81
Primary	46,513	9.6	73,505
Preparatory	7,297	22.4	20,026
Secondary General	2,545	25.1	7,786
Commercial			
Industrial			
Secondary total	2,545	25.1	7,786
Grand total	56,355	12.5	101,317

(a) Data are not available for 1980/81 for Bahrain.

Source: Various Statistical Yearbooks, and especially Socknat, 1983

children of non-national, especially non-Arab, origin living in these oil states. These are usually the children of migrant workers and are dealt with in detail in Section 14.

6. THE IMPORTED EDUCATION SYSTEMS - SOME CHARACTERISTICS

The modern education system as established in the oil-exporting states is essentially an Egyptian one. Egyptian curricula, administrators and, of course, teachers have been imported to the oil states in an extraordinarily comprehensive way. As oil revenues rose, so these states simply imported more Egyptian (and, to a lesser extent, Jordanian) teachers, books and methods, usually overlaid by a special concern for religious studies. Thus it is that the education systems in the oil-exporting states can be characterised as linear, rigid, heavily biased towards arts and literature, and with university education as the pinnacle of achievement.

The structures of the systems in the various Gulf states resemble each other closely. In all, the basic six years' primary schooling is followed by three years' intermediate (or preparatory) level teaching. This is followed by a further three years' secondary education, after which the successful students progress to the University. Some countries, such as Oman, introduce an element of choice at the intermediate level, tracking some students into Vocational Training, but in most countries options are introduced at secondary level. However, as was shown in Table 1, general education continues to dominate in terms of numbers.

The courses are repetitive, and the system geared to the abilities of the least able teachers. There is a strong emphasis upon the literary aspects of education, reflecting Islam's respect for the written word. Satiation of social demand has meant that the expansion of progressively higher levels of general education with little regard for selectivity and quality control has been the norm, with large numbers of students progressing to undergraduate-level studies.

It is notable that girls' enrolments have been expanding more quickly than boys' in the late 1970s. Overall, girls comprised 37 per cent of enrolments in 1975/76, rising to 40 per cent by 1980/81. Sex enrolment equity is being approached in several states; only in Saudi Arabia and Oman do low female shares continue, but even in these states, girls' enrolments have recently grown more rapidly than boys'.

Generally, this pattern of expansion has been with scant regard to the needs of the labour market, particularly in respect of the need for national labour to work in the industrial sectors upon which the future diversification of these economies is reliant. This pattern results from educationists, rather than economic planners, having been imported along with these education systems. It is, therefore, the educationists who have guided the systems' expansion, repeating, often without much heed to local conditions, the decisions and mistakes made in their countries of origin - a point to which the argument returns.

However, in recognition of labour market needs in the oil-rich states, the education systems have had appended a variety of vocational and specialist training institutions (ranging from preparatory level vocational training centres to teacher training and agricultural colleges). But these are not accorded the same prestige as the general academic institutions, and will be skilfully avoided by all but the least able students.

TABLE 2: FEMALE SHARE OF ENROLMENT, BY EDUCATION LEVEL, IN THE OIL-EXPORTING STATES OF BAHRAIN, KUWAIT, OMAN, QATAR, SAUDI ARABIA AND THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES, 1975/76 AND 1980/81 (PER CENT).

	Bahrain (a)	Kuwait	Oman (b)	Qatar (b)	S. Arabia	UAE (b)
Primary						
1975/76	43.6	45.8	27.2	47.9	35.9	45.2
1980/81	44.9	48.1	34.2	48.3	38.7	47.8
Preparatory						
1975/76	45.7	43.7	15.5	47.5	31.0	42.8
1980/81	46.4	44.9	25.1	49.8	34.3	45.5
Secondary						
1975/76	54.5	49.8	28.5	41.3	28.4	39.2
1980/81	51.1	47.1	24.7	51.0	34.1	47.4

(a) For Bahrain, terminal data are 1979/80. Religious education enrolments excluded.
(b) Religious enrolments excluded.

Source: Socknat, 1983

Reference to Table 1 makes it clear that non-general subjects do not attract large numbers. For example, in Qatar, less than 120 students are studying in commercial and industrial secondary courses, compared to over 5,000 in general education. The exception to this is Bahrain, with its older and more mature education system: there, some 2,000 students are enrolled in non-general education, about 24 per cent of total secondary enrolments. Indeed, the number of students in general education has actually declined. Overall, though general education takes the lion's share of secondary level students, with arts students tending to outnumber those studying sciences.

In this, behaviour in these new systems mirrors that which has been prevalent for years in the older-established education systems of Egypt and Syria, for example (though Jordan may be becoming an exception to this). But, quite apart from the academic ethic which is transmitted to the students by the teachers, from an individual's perspective, the choice of general secondary and university education is the economically rational decision. Social prestige notwithstanding, it is this educational ladder which leads to maximisation of lifetime income. This is, in the first place, because all these governments offer (and some insist upon) public sector employment for all graduates. Income is not taxed, and salaries rise sharply with educational qualification.

There is thus high incentive for those who aspire to the civil service to attain as high a level of academic qualification as possible. In appointments to civil services in the Gulf states little or no regard is paid to class or type of degree - simple attainment of the degree is enough to secure the grade. Once the civil servant's beginning grade is established, his rate of progress through promotion is often signalled clearly - quality of work and subsequent training often have little impact upon promotion prospects.

Moreover public sector employment does not preclude private sector activities. Thus, the social demand for general education is economically well founded, when viewed from the perspective of each individual, but it is demand for something which contradicts Western educational concepts and ideals for, rather than acting as forerunners of change, these oil state educational systems become bastions of conservative and traditional values, both religious and social, lagging behind social development rather than stimulating it.

Meanwhile, the concept of education being a direct contributor to economic development, and to the social evolution that must accompany economic expansion, is surprisingly recent and not widely accepted. The assertion that investment in education is investment in "human capital" and, therefore, economic growth, is not given general credence. Although lip service may be paid to this concept, as it is urged by economic planners, in practice it has not come to shape either the structure or the running of these new education systems. Indeed, there is a sense in which many of the educationists running these systems find the concept of education as a contributor to development hard to accept, or even as undesirable. They see it as almost a prostitution of education.

Thus it is that the education systems imported into the Arab oil states do not yet serve fully as the producers of modern industrial workforces. Nor do these systems satisfy the desires for change and

social progress amongst the oil-rich youth of Arabia, open to the wider environment. Yet, at the same time, the education systems - although evaluated in a wider context as conservative - are berated as seditious by more traditional members of Arabian peninsula society.

Here, however, the chief concern is conflict between the "applied, work-force" focus of education, and the focus implied by the conservative educators who administer the systems.

7. CONFLICTS OF PURPOSE OF EDUCATION IN THE OIL-EXPORTING STATES

Education planners and economic planners in the oil-rich states tend to perceive the purpose of education quite differently. Educationists see education as providing a means of personal development and mental enrichment for the student. For these planners, education is a human right, the fulfilment of social demand for knowledge. (The satisfying of this social demand introduces another, political, element into the planning of education systems).

For these educationists, the oil wealth of these states gives opportunity for "idealised" systems to be established, and working in an oil-rich state gives the educationists and administrators a chance to succeedin aims that were frustrated by shortages of funds in their countries of origin. Thus, rapid expansion of primary education to nearly full enrolment (in the space of a decade or two) is followed by provision of intermediate education for almost all primary level completors. This, in turn, is followed, since there is no, or little financial constraint, by the widespread provision of secondary level facilities, after which a large proportion of students pass on to University studies. These University studies are widely thought to be within the capacity of all students in the system. As the financial constraint is removed so is the need for selectivity. As has been established above, within the context of the Arab world and Islam, the stress of this system is upon the liberal arts.

In short, the educational progress of the individual is permitted by the wealth of the state. So it is that, to the Arab education planner, the need for the education systems of the oil-rich states to prepare labour as a factor of production is seen, if real, as remote.

In sharp contrast, economic planners in the oil-exporting states see the purpose of the developing education systems as a service to the economy, as a means of preparing suitably qualified and motivated labour market entrants - potential workers, nationals who will replace the non-national workers who dominate the modern sectors of these economies. The individual's quest for knowledge and learning is, in the mind of the economic planner, all but superseded by the duty of the education system to provide persons of suitable qualification and training to replace or supervise non-national workers in the economy, thereby fulfilling an aim which is clear in all these states which have strident, if not detailed, declarations in their national development plans pertaining to the localising of their workforces.

The concept of education serving manpower needs is not an insistence from the authors alone. It is derived directly from the industrial diversification strategies declared by all of the states, and from explicit statements given in their development plans that the

education and training systems should be oriented in this way.

Thus, from the Second Five Year Development Plan of the Sultanate of Oman, the following example can be quoted:

> "The targets and policies of the ... plan .....
> (for) education, vocational training and manpower
> can be summarized in the following:
> 1. To orient the educational and the vocational training systems to meet the country's economic needs of human resources;
> 2. To adjust the educational and vocational training curricula in accordance with the needs of local communities so as to match their regional production activities;
> 3. To stress the importance of secondary technical education and teachers' training institutes;
> 4. To stress the importance of vocational training." (pages 105-6)

Goven the industrialisation strategy of all of the GCC states, their education systems are all subject to those aims. It is the degree to which the states are failing to fulfil those aims, as aspects of human resource development, which prompted the authors to produce this paper. For, because of the way in which the education systems are managed, the degree to which labour market aims are manifest in the schools and educational institutions of the oil-rich states is limited indeed.

8. THE DEPENDENCE UPON NON-NATIONAL TEACHERS

8.1 The Overall Picture

The extent to which the education systems in the oil-rich states are imported can be illustrated by reference to the degree of reliance upon non-national teachers. Table 3 shows the numbers and proportions of non-national teaching staff in the various oil-rich states in 1975/76 and 1980/81.

Several of these states have recently reduced the degree to which they make such information readily available to the public. This, itself, is some indication of growing awareness of the extent of dependence upon non-nationals (in education and other sectors of the economy) and a growing worry about the issue amongst those presently in political power.

Between 1976 and the present, the proportions of teachers of various nationalities have generally changed little. Only in the Sultanate of Oman has change been especially marked in this respect, by peninsula standards, (though, in each of the oil states, evolution of the education system is rapid by either Western or Third World standards). Omani progress has been particularly rapid since 1976 because Oman was then the state in which the primary age groups exhibited the lowest enrolment rate. In all the other states tabulated, a satisfactorily high level of primary enrolment (at least of 6 year olds) was being approached. Therefore, the expansion of primary education was slowing from the soaring rates of the early 1970s. In contrast, in Oman, between 1975/76 and 1980/81, the number of teachers in the education system rose by 3,400, to 5,660. Consequently, the proportion of non-national teachers rose even more sharply in Oman to 89 per cent in 1980, compared with 86 per cent in 1975: the output of Omani national teachers (who totalled just over 600 in 1980/81) could not keep pace with

TABLE 3: TEACHERS, BY NATIONALITY, IN THE OIL-EXPORTING STATES OF BAHRAIN, KUWAIT, OMAN, QATAR, SAUDI ARABIA AND THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES (UAE), 1975/76 and 1980/81.

	National		Non-national		
	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	Total
Bahrain					
1975/76	2,169	75.6	701	24.4	2,870
1979/80	2,847	80.0	710	20.0	3,557
Kuwait					
1975/76	4,758	30.8	10,714	69.2	15,472
1980/81	6,047	26.4	16,838	73.6	22,885
Oman					
1975/76	320	14.3	2,230	85.7	2,550
1980/81	618	10.9	5,045	89.1	5,663
Qatar					
1975/76	560	25.9	1,600	74.1	2,160
1980/81					3,488
Saudi Arabia					
1975/76	25,101	49.0	26,075	51.0	51,176
1980/81	44,768	52.0	41,309	48.0	86,077
UAE					
1975/76	320	6.6	4,526	93.4	4,846
1980/81					

Source: Various Statistical Yearbooks, and especially Socknat, 1983

the expansion of the system.

In Kuwait, Qatar and the UAE there has been a steady increase in dependence upon non-nationals since the mid-1970s; only in Saudi Arabia and Bahrain has reliance upon non-national teachers fallen slightly.

Overall, some 58 per cent of teachers in these states were non-national in 1976. By 1980/81, the proportion of non-nationals was 55 per cent. The lowest dependence upon non-nationals was in Bahrain, where the modern education system was established in 1919 (although a girls' primary school was established by the American Arabian Mission in 1892). By 1932, when the education system was taken over by the government, a number of schools were in operation in Bahrain - this contrasts sharply with the evolution of education elsewhere in the peninsula. The more gentle increase in labour demand in Bahrain than in the other oil states has made the teaching profession relatively attractive to Bahraini nationals.

The most acute reliance upon expatriate teachers was in the UAE, where about nine out of ten teachers were non-nationals. Despite a high priority being given to the localisation of the UAE teaching staff, the plethora of employment opportunities for UAE nationals means that, to the vast majority, teaching is bleakly unappealing.

8.2 Qualitative Dependence upon Non-National Teachers

Reliance upon non-national teachers rises with educational level. For example, in Kuwait in 1976, some 52 per cent (2,800) of primary school teachers were nationals. In contrast, only 22 per cent (1,030) of intermediate level teachers and only 10 per cent (320) of secondary school teachers were nationals. This pattern is closely repeated in all the states under consideration.

It is a consequence of the youth of these educational systems, and of the longer period of time needed to train post-primary level teachers that, at the time of writing, so few secondary level national teachers have been produced.

At which educational levels the dependence upon non-national teachers might be most or least deleterious is moot, and will become the subject of growing concerned discussion (see below, section 10). However, it will remain true that the upper levels (with the possible exception of university education) will long remain more dependent upon non-national teachers than primary and lower levels. This is because the three or four years' (minimum) post-secondary education and training that is essential to produce a secondary school teacher can, if re-directed towards another profession, provide entry into employment which is at once both more remunerative and associated with greater social status than teaching.

In view of the burgeoning employment opportunities throughout the oil-rich states for nationals with even limited formal education, there is no reason why they should be expected to flock into teaching in the near future. At least, this is true of male job seekers, but the case of females might be rather different.

9. FEMALE TEACHERS IN THE OIL-EXPORTING STATES

Teaching, especially of girls, is one of the professions in which the employment of women is most socially acceptable in these states. Indeed, women are needed to teach the more senior girl students, one of

the few examples of females actually having an advantage over males in these labour markets. Women are already active as teachers in these states.

The picture of dependence upon non-national teachers would be far more extreme but for the number of female teachers already in employment. Female Kuwaiti primary school teachers outnumber their male counterparts by four to one. Females are also a majority of teachers in Qatar. In the other states, a significant share of primary school teachers are female (approaching 35 per cent in Saudi Arabia, for example). In Qatar, significant ground was broken in terms of a new role for women teachers (and, indeed, for women as a whole) when women national primary school teachers were given charge of boys' classes. This project was monitored carefully by other Gulf States and moves have been made by Kuwait and Bahrain to adopt a similar strategy.

Non-national female teachers also account for significant proportions of teaching staff at all educational levels, and are also increasingly widely used for the teaching of boys at primary level. In all, some 35 per cent of the non-national teachers in the states considered here are female. In numerical terms there were some 9,000 non-national female teachers in Saudi Arabia (1976), amounting to over 35 per cent of total imported teaching staff. By 1980/81, the number of non-national female teachers had risen to over 16,200. Female non-national teachers outnumber nationals in all states except Bahrain.

The influence of these non-national teachers, especially upon the older age groups of female students, can only be the subject of conjecture. (A search of the literature reveals that few studies of education systems and their effectiveness have taken into account the impact of non-national teachers upon students). However, the difference between the personal values, social behaviour and expectations of an Egyptian or Jordanian woman teacher, and those of the mother of a Saudi girl secondary student are patently considerable. The non-national women teachers (like their male counterparts) frequently feel, show and express little respect for the conservative aspects of the society of the host state in which they teach. Even the rigidities of the education system do not prevent a good deal of deliberate indoctrination of Saudi, Kuwaiti and Emirati girls with "free-thinking" Egyptian and Jordanian ideas, not to mention the implicit transfer of values from teacher to student and the demonstration effect of the teachers' behaviour.

This leads directly to some wider aspects of the deleterious effects of employing non-national teachers in Arabia.

10. SOME DISADVANTAGES OF EMPLOYMENT OF NON-NATIONAL TEACHERS

10.1 An Ill-Suited Methodology

By importing the Egyptian education system with but little modification, the oil-exporting states have adopted a system which, patently, was developed under sharply contrasting economic conditions. In Egypt (and the other countries supplying teachers to these Arabian oil states - Sudan, Jordan, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka) the development of education policies, systems, curricula, methods and teachers alike is dominated by one fact - lack of financial resources, for all these teacher-supplying states are capital-poor states. Human resources were in excess, and the financial constraint a major problem dominating the milieu in which these teachers

were themselves taught and subsequently practised when at home. Therefore they are accustomed to a labour-intensive routine, with minimal capital inputs.

This "ethos" within education is ill-fitted to the situation in the Arabian oil states, where capital is the abundant resource in the education sector and human resources scant. Thus a capital-intensive mode of education is warranted, with the most modern of teaching aids, methods and back-up, to reduce reliance on teachers. But the imported teachers are ill-trained to deal with such teaching methods, and, crucially, the imported administrators unlikely even to conceive of the potential for the applicability of modern capital-intensive methods.

Attempts to improve quality of teaching, in accordance with the financial resources available in the oil states, paradoxically centre upon intensifying labour inputs - reducing class size, monitoring teachers in an intensive way, and giving a long teaching day.

Unfortunately, the ostensibly most effective means of improving quality of instruction and an area in which oil-rich states hoped to make some gains - reduction in class size - is being shown by modern research to have little impact beyond a certain optimum point, where quality of teacher becomes far more important.

10.2 Quality of Imported Teachers

The quality of non-national teachers depends upon recruitment, since the oil states do not train the non-national teachers themselves, but "import" them ready-qualified on either a contract or secondment basis.

There is a regional shortage of well-qualified Arabic-speaking teachers. The rapid expansion of the oil-rich states' education systems, together with attempts elsewhere in the region to widen primary enrolments (Sudan) and increase secondary technical and vocational education (Jordan) have resulted in a tight market for teachers throughout the region. Thus, Jordan has become reluctant to allow a larger number of teachers to work abroad, as have Syria and Sudan. Only Egypt continues to have a number of teachers readily available for secondment abroad, and it is likely that, even in Egypt, where the education system represents a massive industry, the scale of export of teachers has begun to have a detrimental impact upon the quality of domestic teaching. Therefore, the recruitment of teachers has become a chronic problem for the oil-rich states. They have progressively less choice and influence over which teachers they import, and, as less experienced and less capable teachers gain secondment or direct contract, the quality of teacher employed in the labour-importing states falls.

This becomes especially true as blanket recalls of teachers who have served for several years in the oil-rich states become more common. In order to minimise damage to their domestic education systems, sending governments are limiting the number of years their teachers may remain abroad. Thus, quality control of the teaching force by selective renewal of contracts has also been eroded.

It is worth noting here why the teacher-supplying states are becoming serious about recalling some of their teachers employed in the oil-rich states: the teacher-supplying states' own education systems are not in a robust condition. This is best evidenced by the fact that the crude rate of illiteracy in the Sudan remains 80 per cent, that the number of illiterates in Egypt continues to grow, and that even in Jordan the crude rate of illiteracy remains as high as 35 per cent. Such societies,

from almost any perspective, can scarcely afford even a fraction of the level of teacher exports they presently sustain.

Because non-nationals in the oil-rich states tend not to qualify for any training at the host countries' expense, non-national teachers do not receive much upgrading or many refresher courses. Therefore, the education systems relying most heavily upon non-nationals tend not to have teachers going through upgrading or refresher courses. This again holds back the application of modern capital-intensive and imaginative teaching techniques.

10.3 The Realities of Contrasting Backgrounds

More generally, the oil-exporting states' education systems must continue with a teacher force which, although of considerable commitment, must always be considered to have a primary loyalty to another state and to another education system. This, combined with the not inconsiderable differences of culture and ethics between the labour-exporting and the labour-importing states, means that localisation of the teaching forces of the oil-rich states must be of high priority if the future school populations are to be developed as they should be.

The significance of this can be highlighted by instancing an example of what the import of an Egyptian teacher to an oil-rich state might actually mean in practice.

Consider an Egyptian primary school teacher, himself likely to be the first literate in his family, either the son of a Nile Delta farmer living in a small village, or the offspring of an artisan in metropolitan Cairo. The teacher, never having travelled out of his home area before, might be the product of as little as eleven years of the rigid and stereotyped Egyptian education system. He really knows little about the Arab world outside his home region, and is bound up with local prejudices such as disdain for the bedouin, and a ubiquitous disregard for rural life, combined with the notion that success is, by definition, associated with rural-urban migration. This man, following the first air flight of his life, and glimpses of the modernity, glass and chrome of urban Riyadh, after a Toyota ride up a graded road, finds himself obliged to walk up a track to a converted stone-house primary school high in the terraced mountains of Assir. He experiences scarcely less culture shock than a European transported to the same village. The Arabic sounds strange, indeed is barely intelligible to him; the life style is alien, and, according to his terms of reference, gives him little cause for respect; the food is poor and the housing wanting. Yet he is there to teach the children of those hills and bring them into the mainstream of modern Saudi Arabian life.

Such a situation, which, if caricatured, is not wildly exaggerated, scarcely suggests the establishment of an education system modern in outlook and method, directed effectively to the development of a technically and professionally qualified modern sector workforce.

11. CONFLICTS BETWEEN NATIONAL AND NON-NATIONAL TEACHERS

It is because of these problems associated with the importing of teachers that the localisation of the teaching forces of the oil-exporting states receives a high priority in planning. The introduction of some

national teachers into the education system is not, however, without its own extra difficulties. These stem not so much from problems inherent in the new national teaching force, but from how they highlight the shortcomings of non-national teachers remaining within the system.

When the education systems in these states were passing through the stage in which virtually all teachers were non-national, many of the deleterious effects of employment of non-national teachers were not too apparent. But as national teachers are introduced into the education system with the establishment of teacher training colleges, so, by virtue of comparison, the shortcomings of non-national teachers become more easily perceived by the nationals of the oil-rich states which the non-national teachers have been brought in to serve.

The lack of social integration of the non-national teacher in rural areas especially, for example, is highlighted by the arrival of a local national teacher. Suddenly, the villagers realise that modern education need not be so alien, that ideas can be adopted less hesitantly, and that teachers can be integrated with local society without their social standing being eroded: indeed it can be enhanced by the teachers' filling a wider role within rural society.

This is the case despite general agreement amongst commentators about the poor quality of preparation of these national teachers and there is general agreement that teacher training must be improved. But recruitment for such training will have to compete with recruitment for a growing number of post-preparatory and post-secondary activities, not least the universities.

The low prestige accorded to teaching is acknowledged to be related to the quality of intake. Quality of intake is, indeed, crucial and is not much improved by raising the educational level of training institutes. Neither does raising the level of the institute automatically improve the quality of instruction given there.

As national teachers are taught and trained largely by non-nationals, extra care is essential in recruiting teacher training instructors.

Compounding the problem of training the young national teacher adequately is the fact that premature promotion within the system is a strong possibility. The teacher is quickly raised to a position of increased responsibility, yet without the required experience. This, in practice, allows the non-national teachers much scope for abuse of the system and makes for poor administration.

Thus it is that the introduction of a certain number of national teachers into the education system, in line with the policy of localisation of teaching staff, aggravates tensions within the system, and tends to detract from public satisfaction with imported educational services. Yet, from the introduction of the first products of national teacher training institutes to significant localisation of the teaching staff, there must be a considerable lapse of time. Indeed, so challenging is this task that, in Kuwait, the proportion of teachers who are national continues to fall slightly at all but secondary and university levels. Realistic projections of the supply of teachers, taking into account the other employment opportunities available to those nationals with teacher training qualifications, suggest that Kuwaitisation of the teaching staff cannot be achieved until well into the next century. The same problem exists

in Saudi Arabia, Oman and UAE.

This situation prevails despite substantial inputs into teacher training in all these states. In Saudi Arabia some 21,000 students were enroled in teacher training institutes in 1980/81, an increase of some 6,000 over 1975/76 enrolments. Moreover, more potential teachers are enroled in colleges of education at the Saudi Arabian universities. Even the UAE has managed, since 1975/76, when no trainee teachers were under instruction, to enrol 2,500 nationals in teacher training. But the projected needs of teachers are such that no great gains will be made in increasing the national share of the teaching stock.

In terms of the level of satisfaction with, or criticism of, the education system by the client populations in the oil-rich states, the education and training systems are only just beginning to experience a new range of problems. Public pressure for what is perceived as improved quality will be a force with which education planners will increasingly have to come to terms. In this respect, it is interesting to compare provision of educational with health services; the populations of the oil states have shown an almost insatiable desire for an ever-improved standard of health provision, which they remain adept at criticising. Similar criticisms will soon be levelled at education systems.

However, in this, there is something of a paradox, as is considered in the following discussion of quality of education.

12. MOTIVATION AND QUALITY WITHIN THE EDUCATION SYSTEMS

Having considered the nature and application of the teaching staff, two major determinants of educational quality remain - the nature and manner of development of the curricula and the motivation of the students. This section turns to motivation: the degree to which students are keen to apply themselves - regardless of their innate ability - in order to succeed within the system.

In most developing world education systems, motivation stems from the desire to obtain formal educational qualifications, and, indeed, to excel in them, in order to enter the labour market upon the most advantageous terms. The widespread nature of unemployment - including educated unemployment - has meant that success in education is viewed as an almost essential precursor to a successful and remunerative career in the formal modern or public sectors. In popular terms, education is seen as a ladder out of poverty into secure employment for the poor and underprivileged. Once on the bottom rung of the educational ladder, students fight, through examination competition, to gain access to higher rungs, convinced that success at each succeeding educational level will bring them disproportionate economic gains during their working lives.

In conventional developing countries, modern sector employment opportunities are few and the subject of intense competition and in most Third World economies failure to enter the modern sector often means a life of deprivation and poverty.

In the non-oil states, education is seen as the essential key to entry into the modern sector, but even obtaining an education to, say, secondary level, is by no means an assurance of successful entry into modern sector employment, as is shown by the existence of educated unemployment. Therefore, students in the education system are doubly determined to excel in their studies: success at school is likely to make more than a marginal difference in the labour market.

For nationals of the oil-exporting states, however, a contrasting labour market situation prevails, for the investment expenditures in domestic industry which result from oil revenues have brought about a labour market in which job opportunities proliferate, and outnumber nationals entering the labour markets.

Moreover, government recruiting policies have, thus far, ensured that any national who chooses to enter the public sector is virtually guaranteed employment - regardless of educational level. (This is a result of the concept noted above of government being a revenue spreader, rather than a generator of wealth).

This ease of employment in the labour market means that conventional motivation of national students in the education system, stemming from the desire to gain access to formal or public sector employment, is much eroded. The extent to which students excel in their class or at their level does not influence employment prospects significantly. Even complete failure, and dropping out of education, does not necessarily mean unemployment, or even low-return informal sector employment, for even illiterates can secure well-paid work in the government departments of these states. Thus the desire to succeed, as driven by "hunger", does not exist in the oil states' education systems.

The prospects of the level of employment are, however, influenced by the point of exit from the school system: civil service regulations tie grade of employment closely to educational level (as against achievement). Therefore, although dropping out of school is by no means a disaster in employment terms, employment prospects are well served by remaining within the education system for as long as possible. Thus, students, although not driven to excel, do attempt to remain within general education, passing to ever higher levels (including university) before entering the job market.

Thus the education system develops, driven by social demand, - a real political manifestation - pressing for ever greater provision of general education at ever higher levels, but with no real concern for competitive selection or standards.

13. THE SYLLABUSES, SELECTION, EXAMINATIONS AND LEVELS OF EDUCATION

13.1 Primary Education

Provision of universal primary education is unequivocally beneficial (with the caveat that it, like all other levels and forms of education, carries massive budget implications into the future in terms of current costs).

Getting children and parents of families to accept the discipline of school attendance is in itself a major achievement and the necessary foundation for an industrialized society. Basic education is a human need,

and indeed a declared human right, worldwide, and the mere fact of getting children into school facilitates provision of health care and prevention of disease. Children meet children and a social need is fulfilled. The extension of loyalty to institutions outside the immediate family begins and children may be brought to see themselves as members of a nation, and ultimately of humanity, with certain obligations and compensating rights. Childrens' readiness to imitate is most marked, their curiosity acute and their desire sharp for gaining physical and mental power. They are at their most impressionable age. Perhaps at this age, if ever, their need for high-quality teaching is greatest.

The oil-rich states of Arabia have achieved much by getting so many children into primary schools in such a short time, though attendance is not yet compulsory in all of the states. But the states are bedevilled by an absolute shortage of high-quality Arabic-speaking teachers of any nationality, and to some extent by an attitude, not unique to the Arab oil states, which regards primary school teaching, almost contemptuously, as work suited to men and women of limited intellect. The consequences of this attitude are that the career is avoided even by those who might cultivate a sense of vocation; material rewards and those associated with esteem are relatively low; primary school teaching becomes in fact a career for the less able; teaching style has to be dictated; syllabuses, however pretentiously compiled for the sake of appearance, are not expressions of reality in the classroom; children's natural curiosity is often frustrated; their propensity to imitate is undesirably exploited; and uniformity of thinking and response is inculcated by physical threat, though corporal punishment is officially proscribed.

Certainly, apart from this, primary education is open to many of the disadvantages of use of non-national teachers enumerated above. Moreover, in some of these education systems, the children soon begin their study of English, for a people preparing to manage technology in the modern world must know English. Their teacher of English is unlikely to be of English origin. His own command of the language, gained in Pakistan, Sudan, India, Jordan, Sri Lanka, or some other country with its own variety of English, may leave as much to be desired as his training as a teacher. If not an Arabic speaker, he may find it almost impossible to give explanations when his pupils are puzzled. True, the pupils may imitate his English (including peculiarities from his own country) but language which is largely imitative may take a long time to become cognitive.

All of this is a far cry from the simple regime of the teacher of Quran who, in traditional society, merely compelled his pupils to chant, look at, and say verses of the Quran until they knew them by heart. He may still be seen at work in the remoter regions, and even in the villages of Egypt today, and for many children he provides their introduction to education at their most impressionable age. The modern primary educational systems in the Arabian oil states are intended to educate children differently, but lessons conducted by non-national and national teachers who themselves began their education in the old way sometimes slip back into the ritual of chanting and it is not unusual to see a 'modern' primary school teacher, eyes glazed and perhaps dreaming of home, orchestrating a chorus of repetition intended to 'fix' his latest lesson in his pupils' minds.

Meanwhile there are the syllabuses, dictated centrally, to be

adhered to rigidly and their implementation subject to inspection by men and women from an educational system where such authoritarianism was, and still is, an economic necessity; inspectors who may themselves compile the syllabuses, inspect the teaching and set and even mark the examinations. Many of them, receiving perhaps ten times the salary they would earn in their home countries, have a vested interest in proving the syllabuses and teaching to be effective. Indeed, measured by the yardstick of their own background and experience they are effective. Real evaluation of the effectiveness of primary education becomes difficult.

13.2 Intermediate Education

The primary stage, six years of elementary education, which in recently founded educational systems originally served the needs of young people beginning their schooling at the age of twelve years or more, as education was introduced to their villages, no longer fulfils the demands of parents whose children begin schooling at the age of six or seven. A thirteen-year-old is clearly too young to enter a labour market no longer agrarian, now prosperous, capital-intensive and easily able to hire labour as required from poorer states. Furthermore, there is now neither need nor desire in the Arabian oil states to track young adolescents into employment. Consequently a second stage of education is required and provided. In the beginning, when its provision is limited, there is an element of selectivity but, as the provision is extended in response to demand, selectivity becomes unnecessary, and impossible to enforce.

In the Arabian oil states the second stage, post-primary, is of three years' duration and is called 'preparatory'. It ends with the granting of a certificate of education to successful pupils. This certificate, if awarded at a high enough level, gives the pupil admission to the third stage of schooling, also of three years' duration and known as 'secondary' education.

Intermediate, or preparatory, education in the Arabian oil states is being made available to almost all children completing primary education, at a speed governed only by the practical difficulties of putting up or modifying buildings, and finding teachers. The teachers (like the builders) are necessarily immigrant, but for this preparatory stage teachers are less plentifully available than for the primary stage. This scarcity delays the abandonment of an unpopular element of selectivity (unpopular socially but countenanced by many teachers), which is in fact seldom more than a superficial barrier easily breached by many pupils with no great hunger for learning.

Teachers everywhere tend to deplore the loss of selectivity in education, because competition for places helps ensure an effort being made by pupils, but the loss of this element merely brings the Arabian oil states into line with normal practice in modern affluent states elsewhere. Immigrant teachers, however, find the loss of selectivity and competition for places particularly counter-productive, as they see it, because their own education was a great privilege, difficult to win, and a means of escaping from poverty. As pupils themselves they had to work hard but now, in the Arabian oil states, they teach pupils who no longer feel threatened by poverty. Without being able to exploit that threat, many non-national preparatory level teachers who had looked forward to a respectable, comfortable and unexpectedly prosperous career passing on, almost word for word, information gained a decade or two ago within the rigid curriculum of Egypt, find themselves at a loss and complain bitterly about invincible ignorance and lack of motivation in their pupils. The

predicament of these teachers is the same as that experienced by teachers in modern wealthy states worldwide during the past twenty years. It leads all teachers, and others, into questioning the purpose of education, and from this kind of questioning some good may come.

There are children who do not enter the preparatory stage and some who do not proceed beyond it, but neither stage is intended as preparation for employment and there is at present no reason why they should be so intended. In the Arabian oil states, national children aged fifteen are not needed by employers of labour, who can import non-nationals, often with skills and experience, for less than they might expect to pay an unskilled national worker.

13.3 Secondary Education

As increasingly larger numbers of pupils move up through the primary and intermediate stages of education in the Arabian oil states, the demand grows for universal provision of secondary education. It is a demand which cannot be ignored, for political reasons, and which the rulers wish to meet in any case, for reasons of natural justice. Again finance exists to make it possible, and buildings can be erected remarkably quickly, but now the scarcity of the human resource - well qualified Arabic-speaking teachers - becomes critical. The oil states recognise that graduates from Arab universities may not be of sufficiently high calibre if they possess only a first degree, and the fact has to be faced that better qualified graduates go to the highest bidder. This leaves the less wealthy oil states, the marginal producers, having to accept second best for their expanding systems. Localisation of the teaching service at this level in those states is a dream of the distant future, for their nationals who succeed in obtaining university degrees seldom have ambitions leading in that direction.

A further obstacle is that such graduates as may be available are most commonly arts graduates, little able to teach the science and mathematics needed by industry. Thus the production of students with an arts bias is perpetuated, for even pupils who wish, after their first year in secondary school, to branch into science subjects, commonly find that the school is unable to provide for them.

Moreover, at this stage the language problem becomes of great significance. There is an awareness, reluctantly conceded, that science students in particular need to acquire English almost as a second language if they are to achieve success at university level, especially if they are to go abroad for studies. But the study time needed to enable students to reach this level of competence in English is seen as prohibitive, and the staff to make it possible simply do not exist. It is therefore impracticable, except as special provision for groups wealthy enough to purchase it or clever enough, in one way or another, to pass through selection procedures. And selection procedures in the Arab oil states are not conspicuously efficient. Tests conducted with samples of pupils selected for secondary education itself, reveal a very great range of attainment and ability, which observation readily confirms. Another complexity in the language problem is that there are natural sentimental objections to the importance (and the difficulty) of learning English. Consequently, English is taught at best as a foreign language and allocated perhaps six hours weekly. As the teaching year in the Arab oil states barely amounts to 35 weeks, only very exceptionally able students, or those with domestic advantages, are able to acquire a genuine ability

to work in English.

Some composers of syllabuses at this pre-university stage, produce epic works suggesting that the whole of human knowledge is to be imparted. If followed diligently these syllabuses would comprise enough work to keep an intelligent student busy for a lifetime, but in practice the entire system is dominated by training for the all-important examinations, which are designed to discover whether the student has learnt, and can reiterate, the materials set for study. Failure in examinations at the concluding stage of school education is painful for students everywhere, but in the Arab oil states it perhaps hits hardest and becomes a matter for deep shame, so the pressure on examiners, and on administrators, who must decide the cut-off point for selection purposes, is very great. Most ingenious are the devices employed by many students to achieve success, for there is a log-jam of students who, by reason of easy and misleading success at lower stages, cannot accept that this time failure is a possibility.

So important is success at this stage, where for the first time selection has to be taken seriously, as university provision for all is not yet practicable, that schools find little time, or inclination, to prepare students for alternative careers, and even secondary technical and secondary commercial schools (both regarded popularly as rather second rate) have their sights also firmly fixed on university entrance.

Although students who fail to enter university are almost certain to be found niches in government service, perhaps in the police or defence forces, they are well aware that, no matter how able they may prove to be, the future product of the universities will quickly outrank them.

13.4 Post-Secondary Education

At post-secondary level, many of the inherent weaknesses and tensions in the education systems become most overt. At university and technical college level, the links between the quality and subject of education and the manpower requirements of the burgeoning modern sector labour markets should be at their most direct. Yet the fact that this link should be so close shows the shortcomings in the education systems as they have developed, driven essentially by provision for social demand, rather than being truly to serve the labour market.

In summary, if the education and training systems of these states were effectively guided by the manpower requirements approach advocated by the economic planners, then post-secondary education would be characterised by : a bias towards the scientific and technological; high quality and research towards the modern (especially private) sector.

In fact, it is apparent that the Arab universities in the oil-rich states do not generally display many of these virtues. (There are, of course, some notable exceptions, such as medicine in Saudi Arabia, which, in certain fields is in the forefront of world research. Also, there is the occasional elite institution, such as the University of Petroleum and Minerals, Dhahran). As in the non-oil-endowed states, the universities tend to display a bias towards the liberal arts, social sciences and other "non-science" subjects.

This is partly a manifestation of the lower levels of the education

system, the feeders to university, being neither selective nor biased towards labour market need, but pandering to social demand for an easy course towards higher education.

But social demand is fuelled by economic reality. In this case by employment policy, in the form of over-generous appointing of nationals, by right and without sensitive regard to quality or qualification, into public service. Thus the subject bias at university is that which is correctly thought by those in the education system to provide the best chance of public sector employment (Oman is notable for planning a University which should be an exception to this rule). And labour market policies towards nationals have perverted the course of planning in the education systems.

But this only answers the problem of the blend of subjects prevailing at oil-state universities. The associated problem of the apparent lack of quality in the upper echelons of education is explained, in simplest terms, by the scale of provision of facilities, compared with the size of the national populations; just as, following the establishment of primary education first, then preparatory, then secondary, so finally post-secondary educational facilities are being provided on a lavish scale. This ensures that public chagrin is not generated by a low transition rate of students between any two levels of the education and training system.

The end result is an education system top-heavy with misdirected, poor-quality students, despite high drop-out rates from the bottom, primary levels of the system.

14. AN UNEXPECTED BUT GROWING ELEMENT - NON-NATIONAL STUDENTS

Not only are many non-national teachers employed but, also, many non-national students are enrolled in the public education systems of the oil-rich states. Clear distinction should be made here between non-national children who speak Arabic and non-national children who do not. For the latter group, no state provision is made other than the granting of rights for Indian, Pakistani or European groups to open schools teaching in their own languages, and utilizing curricula compatible with the state education systems in their countries of origin. These are usually fee-paying schools.

Arabic-speaking non-nationals of school age, resident in the oil-exporting states because of their fathers' employment, generally have the right of enrolment within the state school system. The numbers of such non-national Arab students is rising rapidly; despite tight legislation to limit numbers of dependants of immigrant workers from entering the oil-rich states, increasing numbers of non-national families do arrive, especially from Arab countries. Indeed, the social infrastructure is one of the attractions.

Thus it is that the non-Kuwaiti primary enrolments in Kuwait actually exceed the Kuwaiti nationals enroled at the primary level. Moreover, in 1975/76 some 34 per cent of intermediate students and 40 per cent of secondary enrolments in Kuwaitwere non-national. By 1980/81, these proportions had risen to 53 per cent (Table 4), so that

TABLE 4: NATIONALS' SHARE OF TOTAL ENROLMENT (PER CENT) IN THE OIL-EXPORTING STATES OF BAHRAIN, KUWAIT, QATAR, SAUDI ARABIA AND THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES, 1980/81

Educational level	Bahrain (a)	Kuwait	Qatar	Saudi Arabia	UAE
Primary	97.6	45.0	65.1	85.8	67.4
Intermediate	98.1	47.5	69.0	86.7	66.2
Secondary	97.1	47.0	64.9	82.1	55.6

(a) Bahrain's data are for 1975/76.

Source: Socknat, 1983

Kuwaiti nationals have become a minority in all levels of their own schooling system.

The other oil-rich states do not display such high proportions of non-national students in their education systems. In Saudi Arabia, for example, the proportion of non-national enrolments in the three educational levels was about 12 per cent in 1975/76, but had risen by 1980/81. This proportion ranges down to less than 5 per cent in Oman. Overall, about 15 per cent of enrolments in the oil states' schools are non-national.

Everywhere this share is rising. Non-nationals are boosting sharply the numbers of children with which the education systems are having to cope. The financial burden is, perhaps, not too great an issue (with the exceptions of Bahrain and Oman) but the impact of the non-national enrolments upon the elusive localisation targets within the Ministries of Education is only just becoming appreciated.

Provision of lower levels of education for non-national Arab children does not, as yet, present too pressing an issue. However, as these students progress, and expect to progress, further up the education system, questions of policy will become of acute concern. Should non-nationals from the state education system be granted rights to further education? Should they be granted the right to work in the country which is host to their fathers - the migrant workers who are the cause of the students' being in the labour-importing state? Dependants are presently denied this right to work.

All these issues will assume exaggerated importance if suggestions that these non-nationals are higher achievers than the nationals are borne out.

15. DUALISM: A SUMMARY

In the Arabian oil states, the very governments which wish to diversify their economies away from oil wealth and towards industrialisation have labour policies which drive down standards in the education systems intended to prepare nationals to take over industries now dependent on non-national labour and skill. This frustrating of purpose results from a willingness to provide easy and remunerative employment even for nationals who merely serve out their time in stage after stage of the education systems, and it is a frustration intensified by the fact that the education systems are not designed to prepare young people for genuine productive work in modern technology-based industries.

Immense capital expenditure over a period of only twenty years has produced education systems heavily dependent on expertise imported from countries inexperienced in the utilization of capital in this field. Educational ambition is boundless and ignores the reality of limited human ability in a large, but normal proportion of students, and limited availability of high quality teachers. Much is demanded from the systems, yet teaching receives little esteem. Nationals wish to see the systems localised, but they show little inclination to take up the work themselves. Syllabuses are often pretentious, but life in the classroom is devoted to training for examinations. In the higher stages of education, selection

of students becomes essential, but selection systems are constantly circumvented. Education cannot avoid bringing about social change, but schools must uphold social convention, and even then may be regarded with suspicion.

The oil states want to establish technology and enjoy the fruits of it. They do not want to suffer the side effects. Science-based technology questions all assumptions. In Islamic thinking there are certain assumptions which it is blasphemous to question. The nature of education everywhere is evolving, geared to rapid changes in society and the fast growth and popularity of the informational, electronic media, and as this evolution occurs teachers need constant re-training, but the non-national teachers employed by the Arabian oil states seldom receive it, for the states are reluctant to spent on non-national training. The popular demand is for a greater quantity of formal education, but the states' need is for higher quality in the product of the systems. Orientation of the systems toward science, mathematics and engineering is vital, but those are the areas in which the shortage of competent teachers is greatest, and which the systems are least able to provide.

16. GENERAL LESSONS

An outline of the problems and stresses encountered in rapidly expanding educational systems when finance is no longer a major constraint may be of interest in other countries. Often, when development is proceeding at a more usual rate, it is suggested that the removal of the financial constraint would eliminate the only obstacle preventing the extensive and long-term investment in human capital which, after a decade or two, should prove to be the means of establishing prosperous and contented societies.

Perhaps the first unpalatable lesson to be learnt from the experience in the Arabian oil states is that when, for the sake of rapidity, educational systems and expertise have to be imported, they bring with them the philosophical, social and moral assumptions of their places of origin. Attempts made by the importing country to be selective and limit the influence of these aspects of the imported systems may not succeed. In particular, the influence of the teacher in the classroom is crucial, for the teacher is in daily contact with between twenty and two or three hundred children who, in a decade, will be the citizens and labour force of the host country. Neither must the influence of the imported teacher outside school be underestimated.

Training national teachers takes time, so it needs to begin early in any scheme for expansion: it needs to be given the highest priority, and it needs to offer salaries, esteem and conditions of service which nationals find attractive. Meanwhile, recruitment of non-national teachers must be done with great care, for their quality will make or break the system they enter.

Another lesson is that immediately an imported system has begun to be established it becomes resistant to change. The people within it, especially if their rewards are much higher than those they would receive

in their homelands, quickly acquire an interest in defending it and finding evidence to prove its effectiveness. The best remedy for this may be the periodic commissioning of independent investigators.

It is, however, interesting to speculate upon the limited scope which in practice, exists to adapt the detail of the curriculum to local conditions: if non-national teachers are to stay for only a limited period and are not to be trained or retrained, they are bound to need a curriculum, and a method, similar to that used in their own country of origin. This curriculum is certainly inadequate when considered in the light of educational aims directed towards the fulfilling of labour market needs. The fact that teachers are supposed (by both sending country and importing country) to be short-term workers only, suggests that a truly relevant and locally-oriented curriculum would be impracticable, unless it were possible to change the basis of teacher recruitment significantly or embark upon serious re-training of non-national teachers. The same dilemma affects the adoption of more appropriate teaching methodology.

Perhaps, if planners are serious about the quality of education and its relevance to the labour market, the basis of non-national teacher recruitment really must be changed. Along with this, the training of national teachers, and the prestige accorded to them, must be changed too.

In a developing country without tight financial constraints, there may be an assumption that by putting up schools and colleges, perhaps as very elaborate and beautiful buildings, and equipping them with the latest technological gadgetry, then importing teachers and bringing in the pupils and students, there will be an assurance of success, and that modernisation and compatibility will automatically follow. Sadly, experience proves that no such assurance can be given. Low-quality teachers and sycophantic advice can utterly negate the potential benefit offered by high-quality buildings and equipment.

In oil-exporting countries worldwide, recent falls in oil prices (1983) should cause reconsideration of labour policies. In the Arabian oil states greater attention must be given to displacing non-national labour. Nationals must be guided into industry, particularly in the private sector where they must soon work on an economically realistic (rather than a subsidised) basis: consequent increases of costs in the short term may have to be accepted in the interests of long-term, sustainable, economic activity.

Above all, it should be realized that the time will come when the recurring costs of maintaining complex education systems cannot be met out of the revenue obtained from a diminishing natural resource. When that time comes, the diversified non-oil economy must generate surplus enough to pay at least the recurring costs. The present education systems must therefore be capable of producing the future labour force of that economy, and yet must be lean and cost-effective enough to be sustained by that future non-oil economy. This reality should be paramount in the minds of planners today. Much evidence presently suggests that these economic realities are either ignored or not understood by the education planners now responsible for educational systems in the Arabian oil states.

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In the preparation of this paper, a wide range of documents and publications have been consulted. Many of the themes dealt with in the paper have been touched upon in these publications. But, rather than making the text of the paper heavy with references, we have chosen not to insert large numbers of footnotes or references in the text, but to list a selection of the most important works here.

Apart from publications and working papers, statistical and educational yearbooks from all of the Arabian Peninsula countries have been consulted.

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